



Tom Lantos

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
RANKING DEMOCRATIC MEMBER**

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**FOR INFORMATION CALL:
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Burma Prisoner Release Does Not Show Sufficient Sincerity in Support for Human Rights, Lantos Says

Washington, DC – Congressman Tom Lantos (D-CA), the ranking Democrat on the House International Relations Committee and co-chairman of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, made the following statement today in response to reports from Burma indicating that the ruling military junta has released a small number of political prisoners:

“I am relieved that a relative handful of political prisoners will not sleep in Burma’s prisons tonight, but we who appreciate freedom of conscience must be tireless in trying to free the more than 1,000 prisoners of conscience who remain captive in Burma. Mostly importantly, Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi is still under strict house arrest, and many of the other senior leadership of the National League for Democracy remain behind bars. Unless and until all political prisoners are freed, I fear that these latest releases are just another cynical ploy by Burma’s ruling thugs to convince the international community that they are pursuing a reform agenda. Almost 99 percent of Burma’s political prisoners remain behind bars, and these latest developments cannot disguise this sad fact.”

Some of the released political prisoners include former Members of Parliament aligned with the opposition National League for Democracy party as well as student leader Min Ko Naing. There are an estimated 1,500 political prisoners currently in Burmese jails. Lantos is the author of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, signed into law by President Bush on July 28, 2003, as well as legislation reauthorizing import sanctions against Burma that were signed into law on July 7, 2004.

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